



Legislation Text

File #: 2781-2022, **Version:** 1

BACKGROUND: This legislation authorizes the Finance and Management Director to enter into a contract with Triumph Communications for professional services related to early voting education, information, and associated public service announcements.

Columbus is a home rule municipality which has previously enacted city code that foresees the need to use public funds to "...promote, enforce and protect the fundamental right to vote..." (CCC 2321.55(C)(2)). In addition, the Columbus City Attorney has advised that the use of city funds is legally permissible for this purpose.

This ordinance also requests waiver of the competitive bidding requirements of City Code Chapter 329. This waiver is necessary due to the limited time remaining until the November 8, 2022 general election and the time necessary to establish a contract and provide the needed voter information services prior to such election. The City of Columbus wishes to enter into this contract as a means to provide the needed voter information in an expeditious manner in order that Columbus voters, as well as voters in other areas of Franklin County, can continue to receive nonpartisan information about their fundamental voting rights.

Fiscal Impact: This legislation authorizes an expenditure of \$400,000.00 from the General Fund for consulting services related to early voting education and information. These funds are available within the 2022 General Fund budget.

Emergency Action: Emergency action is necessary given the need to immediately expend these funds prior to the November 8, 2022 general election.

To authorize the Director of the Department of Finance and Management to enter into a contract with Triumph Communications for professional services related to early voting education, information, and associated public service announcements for the 2022 general election; to authorize an appropriation, transfer, and expenditure within the general fund; to waive the competitive bidding provisions of City Code; and to declare an emergency (\$400,000.00).

WHEREAS, in years' past, Columbus and Franklin County voters have received nonpartisan public service announcements regarding opportunities to vote early in person or by mail; and

WHEREAS, trusted, nonpartisan information about voting is critical to our democracy now more than ever; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to expend \$400,000 in city funds to ensure Columbus and Franklin County voters continue to receive nonpartisan public service announcements about voting options; and

WHEREAS, such funds will be used, in a bipartisan manner, to implement the plan previously proposed by the Franklin County Board of Elections; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the City to waive the competitive bidding provisions of City Code Chapter 329 to allow the provision of services related to early voting education, information, and associated public service announcements; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the Department of Finance and Management in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director to enter into said contract in order for services to be provided in advance of the 2022 general election; **NOW, THEREFORE**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That the Director of the Department of Finance and Management is hereby authorized to enter into contract with Triumph Communications for professional services related to early voting education, information, and associated public service announcements for the 2022 general election.

SECTION 2. That the Auditor is hereby authorized and directed to appropriate \$150,000.00 within the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund, fund 1000, subfund 100018, to the Department of Finance and Management per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 3. That the Auditor is hereby authorized and directed to transfer appropriations of \$250,000.00 within the general fund, fund 1000, subfund 100010, per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 4. That per the action authorized by Section 1 of this ordinance, the expenditure of up to \$400,000.00, or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 5. That the funds necessary to carry out the purpose of this ordinance are hereby deemed appropriated, and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

SECTION 6. That the City Auditor is authorized to make any accounting changes to revise the funding source for all contracts or contract modifications.

SECTION 7. That this Council finds it in the best interest of the City to waive the competitive bidding provisions of City Code Chapter 329 for this contract.

SECTION 8. That for the reason stated in the preamble here to, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.